

## Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

-----211810Z 130722 /40

O 211340Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5623

S E C R E T CAPE TOWN 0087

NODIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE FROM EDMONDSON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR RH

SUBJ: RHODESIA: U.S. SUPPORT FOR U.K. INITIATIVE

1. AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE NOT SOUGHT OFFICIAL CONTACTS OUTSIDE US AND UK MISSIONS AND RICHARD'S PARTY ON THIS TRIP, BUT YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER WHETHER I SHOULD SEEK AN OPPORTUNITY BEFORE LEAVING CAPE TOWN TO SEE BRAND FOURIE WITH AMBASSADOR BOWDLER TO EXPRESS USG VIEWS ON CURRENT BRITISH PROPOSALS. SOME GENERAL THINKING ABOUT THE PRESENT STATE OF THE SITUATION FOLLOWS.

2. ALTHOUGH THE BRITISH PAPER BEING GIVEN TO ALL THE CONCERNED PARTIES IS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS THE STRUCTURAL OUTLINE WE WERE GIVEN DEC. 20 AND REPRESENTS A SUBSTANTIAL DEPARTURE FROM THE ORIGINAL FIVE POINTS, IT IS PROBABLY THE ONLY WORKABLE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS THAT WOULD STAND MUCH CHANCE AT THIS TIME. THUS, WHILE WE HAVE OBSERVED THE PROMISE MADE IN SEPTEMBER THAT WE WOULD NOT "PUSH" SMITH BEYOND THE COMMITMENT HE MADE TO ANNEX C, THERE WOULD APPEAR NO REASON TO PREVENT US FROM EXPRESSING US "ADVICE" OR A US "VIEW" THAT SINCE THE PARTICULARS OF ANNEX C HAVE PROVED TO BE UNACCEPTABLE TO ALL OF THE NATIONALISTS, VERY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN

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TO THE BRITISH SUGGESTIONS AS PROBABLY THE ONLY POSSIBLE WAY TO ACHIEVE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION.

3. WHILE WE HAVE INDICATED GENERAL SUPPORT FOR RICHARD'S MISSION AND MADE KNOWN THE FACT OF MY DIRECT LIAISON WITH IT, WE HAVE NOT OURSELVES SAID THAT WE THINK THE BRITISH ARE ON ESSENTIALLY THE RIGHT TRACK. IT IS, OF COURSE, TRUE THAT

THE TRACK MAY LEAD NOWHERE EXCEPT EVER MORE HAZARDOUS TERRAIN, BUT IT MAY STILL BE THE BEST ONE AVAILABLE AS LONG AS ALL SIDES ARE WILLING TO KEEP IT OPEN. RIGHT NOW IT APPEARS THAT FEW IF ANY OF THE PARTIES WOULD READILY ACCEPT THE BRITISH PROPOSALS AS THEY STAND, BUT THE AFRICAN SIDE SEEMS TO BE MUCH CLOSER TO THE POSSIBILITY OF ACCEPTANCE THAN SMITH. ON THE OTHER HAND IF SMITH WOULD AT LEAST PERMIT RICHARD TO KEEP TRYING TO GET FIRMER COMMITMENTS FROM THE AFRICANS--INCLUDING COMMITMENTS TO SAFEGUARD ASSURANCES FOR THE WHITE MINORITY AS WELL AS COMMITMENTS TO THE STRUCTURE OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT, CONTROL OF SECURITY FORCES, AND ENDING OF GUERRILLA WARFARE--PEACEFUL SOLUTION COULD STILL BE POSSIBLE.

4. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WILL STILL NOT BE EASY TO CONVINCE, GIVEN INDICATIONS THAT IT MIGHT AGREE TO THE BRITISH PROPOSALS ONLY IF SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA REPRESENTATION WERE EXCLUDED OR SEVERLY LIMITED (CONDITIONS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE BRITISH AND ABSOLUTELY REPELLING TO SMITH AND THE SOUTH AFRICANS, WHO WOULD PREFER TO SEE MUGABE AND HIS COLLEAGUES EXCLUDED OR CIRCUMSCRIBED). NONETHELESS, THERE MAY BE NEGOTIATING ROOM HERE, IF SMITH COULD BE SATISFIED THAT THERE MAY BE SOME SECURITY IN BRITISH INSISTENCE UPON INCLUSION OF MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE AND THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS PRIOR TO ACTUAL INDEPENDENCE. IT WOULD STILL BE NECESSARY TO CONVINCE THE AFRICANS THAT FAILURE TO AGREE ON SOMETHING LIKE THE BRITISH PLAN WOULD INEVITABLY MEAN THE INDEFINITE EXTENSION OF ARMED CONFLICT WITH DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES FOR ALL CONCERNED. THE SAME ARGUMENT APPLIES, OF COURSE, TO  
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THE WHITE MINORITY AS WELL.

5. THERE STILL APPEARS TO BE SOME THINKING ON SMITH'S SIDE THAT IF HE CANNOT OBTAIN DELIVERY ON THE "KISSINGER CONTRACT" INTERNATIONALLY IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE WEST TO REFUSE HIM SUPPORT AGAINST EXTERNAL MILITARY ATTACK IF HE WERE TO TRY TO APPLY IT UNILATERALLY WITH SOME KIND OF INTERNAL REFERENDUM OR ELECTORAL PROCESS THAT WOULD GIVE IT THE SANCTION OF APPARENT DEMOCRATIC CHOICE. THIS FEELING MAY BE STRENGTHENED BY THE SEEMING ABSENCE OF OPEN U.S. ENDORSEMENT FOR THE BRITISH PROPOSALS, DESPITE THE U.S. HAVING MADE CLEAR AT GENEVA THAT THE U.S. COULD NOT SUPPORT AN EFFORT TO FORGE AN INTERNAL "SOLUTION" THAT EXCLUDED IMPORTANT NATIONALIST ELEMENTS ENGAGED IN THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS.

6. THE POINT OF THE FOREGOING IS NOT TO ADVOCATE AN ALL OUT CAMPAIGN TO SELL THE BRITISH PROPOSALS AT THIS TIME, BUT TO SUGGEST THAT WE MIGHT CONSIDER A SOMEWHAT STRONGER

ENDORSEMENT OF THEM AS A POSSIBLE BASIS FOR CONTINUING SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS. IT IS CLEARLY BEST TO KEEP THE BRITISH INVOLVED IN THE FOREFRONT, BUT WE MIGHT ENCOURAGE THEM AND OTHERS IN THE PROCESS BY INDICATING OUR VIEW THAT THEIR PROPOSALS AND WILLINGNESS TO UNDERTAKE DIRECT PARTICIPATION IN INTERIM GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR RHODESIA DO OFFER THE BEST IF NOT THE ONLY POSSIBLE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS AT THIS TIME. THIS POSITION, WHETHER TAKEN PUBLICLY OR ONLY IN DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS, WOULD IMPLY RECOGNITION THAT THE ORIGINAL FIVE POINTS DO NOT PROVIDE A BASIS FOR COMMON AGREEMENT AND ARE, AT LEAST PARTIALLY, DEAD. WHILE THIS MAY ENCOURAGE SMITH TO ARGUE THAT HE CAN NO LONGER CONSIDER HIMSELF COMMITTED TO HIS DECLARATION OF SEPTEMBER 24, THE REALLY IMPORTANT PARTS OF THAT STATEMENT (HIS PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF THE REALITY THAT A MINORITY RULED RHODESIA CAN EXPECT NO SUPPORT FROM THE WEST, AND HIS AGREEMENT TO THE PRINCIPLE OF MAJORITY RULE) CANNOT REALLY BE RETRACTED. HE HAS  
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ADMITTED THE INEVITABILITY OF MAJORITY RULE AND THAT MUST INEVITABLY AFFECT ATTITUDES IN RHODESIA. THUS, STRONGER U.S. ENDORSEMENT OF THE BRITISH APPROACH, WITHOUT ABANDTNING OUR INSISTENCE WITH THE AFRICANS THAT THEY MUST GUARANTEE CERTAIN MINORITY RIGHTS AS WELL AS FACE THE REALITIES OF WHITE FEARS AND CONTINUED WHITE POWER IN NEGOTIATING A COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT, COULD MAKE SMITH LESS CONFIDENT THAT HE CAN SOMEHOW FORCE THE WEST EVENTUALLY TO SUPPORT HIM BY STICKING TO THE FIVE POINTS AND TRYING TO INSTITUTE THE "INTERNAL OPTION."

7. PERHAPS U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE BRITISH INITIATIVE HAS BEEN ADEQUATELY CONVEYED TO THE SAG THROUGH AMBASSADOR BOTHA IN WASHINGTON. SHOULD YOU THINK IT USEFUL FOR ME TO MAKE ANY SIMILAR APPROACH HERE IN CAPE TOWN, HOWEVER, I WOULD APPRECIATE APPROPRIATE GUIDANCE AND TALKING POINTS. WHILE SOUTH AFRICANS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY PASS SUBSTANCE OF SUCH AN APPROACH ON TO RHODESIANS, DIRECT APPROACH COULD ALSO BE MADE INFORMALLY TO RHODESIAN REPRESENTATIVE HAWKINS SHOULD DEPARTMENT THINK IT DESIRABLE.  
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Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009